

Council considers slew of grant funding requests from community

Written By PETER RICHARDSON

Council Monday night was rescheduled to begin at 6 p.m. rather than 6:30 p.m., in order to allow sufficient time to hear all the presentations from those in Town seeking grant funding from Council, as well as to allow the for final reading and passage of a bylaw to allow IK World Trading to begin setting up their new woodworking shop at 443 Main Street West.

The bylaw had been expected to be passed last Council session, however some changes made at that meeting, required that the draft bylaw be recirculated to the public before it could be passed. The bylaw allows IKWT to set up a temporary situation for three years, at which time the temporary exemption permit expires and they must re-apply for a continuance. Town Planner re-read the proposed draft and Council passed it into law.

Grant Funding

Following a brief recess, Council reconvened to hear the presentations for the 2020 Municipal Grant Funding applications. This was an opportunity for all those requesting grant monies, to come before Council and state their case, in person, as a supplementary addendum to their written applications.

Starting off the night, was Nicole Jefferey and Claudette Kelly from G.E.T. Outreachworks, who were looking for \$1,500 to further their marketing efforts and purchase event supplies. Gathering, Evolving, Transforming, G.E.T. Outreachworks is a non profit organization concentrating on Black history and Cultural Awareness in Dufferin County and Shelburne. They run two two week enrichment programmes, one for the elementary schools and one for the secondary school students.

Greg and Heather Holmes although unable to attend, had requested ?in kind? services from the Town for the Pickin' in the Park event in 2020. This included waiving the rental fees for Fiddle Park, for that weekend.

The groups applying for grant funding represented a broad scope of activities, primarily aimed at the youth of Shelburne and district, including Highlands Youth for Christ, The Door Shelburne, Children's Foundation of Guelph and Wellington, CDDHS Youth Advisory Committee and a new endeavour spearheaded by Alethia O'Hara-Stephenson, who was also involved with three other applications as well. The latter, was a Food and Music Festival aimed at bringing diverse cultural entities together through the use of music and food.

Mayor Wade Mills, suggested that this could perhaps fit in well with the plans of the Heritage Music Festival, which was looking for ways to diversify it's musical footprint away from simply the Fiddle Contest. Coun. Kyle Fegan commented that when soliciting money or support, the organization should consciously shy away from mentioning the fiddle contest and instead concentrate on the term Heritage Music Festival, which would present a more enticing fit with their proposals and prevent the appearance of them being at cross purposes with the fiddle contingent. Alethia was open to any such ideas and intended to approach the Heritage people again. Treasurer Carey Holmes asked what the plans were for any potential profit from the festival, to which she was told that excess money would be donated to a community charity.

Other groups looking for funding or in kind services, included the Little Family, for their Haunt in the Park, The BIA for the Santa Clause Parade, the Fiddle Parade Committee, the Food Bank, Shelburne's Farmers Market, Multicultural Day and Shelbrrr Fest. Although several were requesting in-kind services, the Shepherd's Cupboard Food Bank were requesting a max grant of \$5,000 for 2020. Deb Wagstaff and Ardith Dunlop, wife of the past deputy mayor Jeff Dunlop, presented an exemplary portrayal of the need for the food bank and the monetary problems it is facing.

With costs constantly on the rise, the Food Bank is facing a financial crunch, that has seen them offer fewer fresh produce coupons this year amid the rising threat of competition for the public's dollar. Deb mentioned that in the last two years they have seen their

clientele virtually double, from 80 to 100 users per month to as many as 180, however they are still having to compete for funding and foods, with things such as the Christmas Hamper program and the breakfast programs in schools. Though far from begrudging these initiatives, she pointed out that the Food Bank is a year round operation and has to pick up the slack when other programs are over for the year.

The Food Bank receives almost all it's major donations between September and February annually, leaving them scrambling to service the other six months of the year.

Publicity is also a double edged sword for the Shepherd's Cupboard, as there is still a stigma in the minds of many about needing a helping hand. Deb stressed that many of their clients are just trying to get back on their feet after an occurrence that was beyond their control, such as a disaster or the loss of a job.

At the end of the session, before adjourning for the night, Council approved a 10 percent increase in the total amount of the available grant monies, bringing the total to \$22,000 dollars and left their final award decisions until the next Council meeting on Oct. 28.